

Dear Grandma and Grandpa

...doting aunts & uncles, teachers and friends...there's a special child in your life who needs your loving support.

We want to tell you about a program that could make a difference in the life of that child, and to show you how you can be part of its success.

Back in the 1960s, a remarkable doctor discovered that things we eat can affect the way we behave, as well as our ability to reason and learn.

In 1951, after a long and distinguished career as both an allergist and pediatrician, Ben F. Feingold, M.D. accepted the challenge to create the Department of Allergy for the Kaiser Permanente Medical Centers of Northern California, and served as its Chief.

At that time, like today, the classical allergist's technique was to use an elimination diet when allergy causes are not clearly identified. This means that suspected foods are not eaten for a while, and the patient is observed to see if he improves.

Dr. Feingold was using an elimination diet for asthma and skin allergies, which had been developed at the Mayo Clinic. Researchers in several countries helped develop this diet to treat aspirin-induced asthma. They found that there is an aspirin-like chemical (salicylate) in some foods and food additives.

The connection with behavior was first made in 1965 when a woman came to Dr. Feingold with painful giant hives. Her hives cleared up in less than three days.

A few days later, Dr. Feingold received a call from the Center's psychiatry chief, wanting to know "what he had done" to that patient. Dr. Feingold explained that he had placed her on the allergy elimination diet.

It seems this patient had been in psychotherapy for two years for hostility and aggression, and these behaviors disappeared on



the diet.

As the clinic expanded the use of the diet for other allergic patients, Dr. Feingold began to hear that some of the children who were being treated for allergies also had problems with behavior or learning, and that they were suddenly functioning well, both at home and in school.

He kept hearing that patients became calmer and better able to concentrate when the additives and salicylates were removed.

Parents began to bring children who didn't have allergies, but had behavior problems, and about half of them improved on the diet.

Allergists are accustomed to seeing various physical reactions to foods and food additives, but Dr. Feingold's work alerted the medical community to the fact that these things can also cause a change in behavior.

By the 1960s pediatricians began to see a growing number of children who were having serious behavior problems.

They were being given labels of "minimal brain dysfunction" or "hyperkinesis."

Dr. Feingold then recognized that the number of disturbed

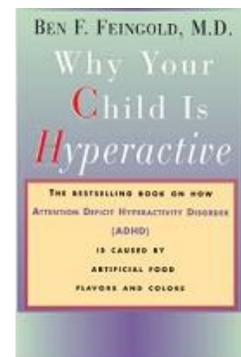
children increased along with the number of synthetic chemicals added to our food supply, especially in the United States. He realized that while food additives had been used for many years, their use had begun to greatly increase following the end of World War II.

In the 1940s and 50s children ate beige-colored cereal and drank orange juice for breakfast.

But in the 1960s they were eating Lucky Charms and by the 1970s orange juice had been replaced by Tang. The use of food additives continued to increase and today garish colors are added to foods (and medicines) of all kinds, especially those designed for children.

After helping hundreds of children and adults in his clinical practice, Dr. Feingold published the results of his work in professional journals and, in 1973, presented his findings to the American Medical Association.

At the request of a major publisher, he wrote the book, *Why Your Child is Hyperactive*.



At an age when most men ease into retirement, Dr. Feingold continued to study the diet-behavior link, to speak to parent and professional conferences, and to publish his

findings. His last scientific paper was written when he was 82.

Dr. Feingold's work has reached around the globe, helping children and adults. What was once a problem primarily for English-speaking countries has become an international crisis as more Western junk food is available world-wide.

People who follow the Feingold Program need to restrict their intake of "natural salicylates" (apples, oranges, etc.) for a few weeks, and then may add them back one at a time.



Only those foods that are not tolerated are removed (but they can be retested in the future). Beyond that, people on this Program can use virtually any kind of food; the change in their diet is that they eat the brands that are free of certain synthetic additives.

Synthetic dyes are the most infamous of the additives we remove. You may have bought a set of red, yellow, green, and blue "food color." These innocent little bottles contain chemicals which are synthesized from petroleum and are suspected of causing serious health problems, including cancer.

Most food dyes have already been banned as health hazards, and the few that remain have been found to trigger behavior, learning and health problems in people sensitive to them. Some studies suggest that these chemicals can interfere with electrical impulses in the brain involved in thinking, movement, behavior control, etc. Other studies show they cause changes in cell DNA.

Like most food additives, the dyes were used for decades before our government required any safety testing on them.

But even today, there is no requirement that a food dye, or any other additive, be tested for its effect on behavior and learning.

The other additives we remove are artificial flavorings, the three preservatives BHA, BHT and TBHQ (also made from petroleum), and some of the synthetic sweeteners such as aspartame (NutraSweet, Equal), sucralose (Splenda), etc.

Because we are all unique, a compound that appears to be tolerated by one person may be a real problem for the next. Other factors include the age and weight of an individual, as well as the amount of chemical consumed.

Synthetic food colorings, once made from coal tar, and now from petroleum, have been around and consumed occasionally for many years; the key is "occasionally."

A child growing up in the 1940s did not begin his day with bright blue toothpaste, followed by fluorescent colored cereal with candy bits, and imitation orange juice. She didn't top breakfast off with a synthetically colored and flavored chewable vitamin. Toothpaste was white, cereal was beige, and vitamins tasted awful. When a child got sick, the medicine was probably dark and unpleasant tasting – a far cry from today's shocking pink, red or purple colored flavored potions.

Our food supply has changed drastically in the space of a few decades (even JELL-O was all natural when it was first introduced), but little bodies haven't changed. The child who



consumes these additives may be getting an overload, taking in more toxic chemicals than his small body can handle.

Grown-ups can have a tough time coping with these chemicals as well. Some of us are more sensitive than others, and we have different thresholds of what we can tolerate, just like medicine. In fact, Dr. Feingold noted that, except for terminology, there is no difference in structure between a chemical we call a food additive, and one we call a drug.

If this all sounds like farewell to candy, ice cream, soda and miscellaneous junk food, that isn't really the case. The secret is to know which candy bar, which brand of ice cream, etc. is free of the harmful additives. Of course, we ask you to hold off bringing out these foods until after a child has eaten a good meal.



The Feingold member can provide you with the names of acceptable products available in your supermarket. Whether you're looking for a pancake mix, salad dressings, cookies, or any other food, you should be able to find a suitable brand in our *Foodlist*. Chances are you are already using many of these products.

You will probably be able to use your favorite recipes, but simply substitute one or two ingredients. For example desserts would be made with real vanilla, not artificial vanilla or "vanillin."

Feingold cooking is basic old fashioned real food, whether you cook from scratch, prefer mixes, or used prepared products. You can even locate "real" fast food; the secret is knowing what to look for and what to avoid. That's where we can help.

See: www.feingold.org